The Rig

Southern District Oilers Gridiron Club

August 2017

Oilers Mourn Loss of Club Legend George Williams

A Tribute by Robert WestMcInnes

The Southern Districts Oilers was founded in late 1985, playing its first game in 1986. Just 6 years later, on a Tuesday while shopping in Colonnades shopping center, George Williams found a club flyer on the community notice board. He came out to his first training session that Wednesday and played on Saturday. Having great football knowledge obviously helped achieve this, however it's the standard of committing 100% that overshadowed this amazing feat. A standard which never faulted.

George very quickly became league renowned as a ferocious and fearsome lineman, proving very handy in many other positions, such as Running back and linebacker. His bread and butter however was Guard and Defensive End, claiming many GASA All-Star awards respectively.

George compiled several SA State team representations, in particular 1996, where he played in SA's only victorious State Championship Final defeating New South Wales 34-0.

Back in South Australia, his hunger and passion for the Oilers grew and so did his leadership as arguably the leader of a new wave of Oilers. This was highlighted by Coaching/Playing with 15 Oilers through a grueling 12 games season to the finals to upset the previously 2 years undefeated Razorbacks in a nail biting match up. George was rightly accredited GASA Coach of the year.

Accompanying these accolades with club record of most games played (estimated at 250+), it's quite easy to see George was the life force for the Oilers for many years. However, the many records are just a small part of the huge presence George Williams had within the Oilers.

He was always heavily involved with the clubs committee and no role was too big or too small. He simply did it all. Taking on the role as Club President, he ensured the Oilers growth, helping the development of the Junior competition but George wanted more. He wanted the Oilers to have more. He achieved this by opening his arms and welcomed the Oilers as family. This in turn made The Southern Districts Gridiron Club a brotherhood. George's ability to take on new teenage recruits, teach them, not only football but also life skills and turn them into the respectable men that lead the club today is a credit to his legacy as an Oiler.

George Williams was the walking definition of Oilers football, passionate to a fault about the things he loved. He loved the Oilers and we were protected by that. Anything wearing a colour other than navy blue was insignificant.

Our hearts and condolences go out to S'Jeannette, Jordan, Jesse, Dante and everyone else in the Williams Family. Just like George was there for us, we will always be here for you.

Rest In Peace Brother #72.

RIG UP

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A Note from the President

The course of this last month has been what can best be described as a bittersweet experience for the Oilers. Our senior division pre-season commenced with an unprecedented number of fresh rookies joining the team and eager to make their mark on Gridiron SA. These new faces coupled with our seasoned veterans have swollen our ranks and will make for some interesting positional battles as we head into our annual minicamp.

For our junior players, Oscar O'Reilly and Josh Dunham, months of work spent learning the game had culminated into a hard earned win in their debut game for the Chiefs. Both players made major on-field contributions that helped to push the team to victory. I think I speak for everyone within the club when I say that we are proud of your efforts and look forward to seeing you grow both as players and valued club members.

While this has all been a bright start to the football season, the loss of club icon and all-time great George Williams has brought an overwhelming sadness upon us. George will always be remembered for his infectious personality and strong demeanor, never giving in or bowing to defeat, he truly was the personification of the term "ironman" on the football field and off. He and his ex-wife S'Jeannette were and still are pillars for this club, having kept us going in the darkest of times, refusing to let us sink into the depths of irrelevance. The club and I cannot thank you both enough for what you have given us which is the gift of football and a brotherhood that links us no matter happens in this life or the next.

The brightness of this world is lessened in your absence George. Rest in peace my friend, my mentor, my brother.

-President Matthew Whaites